

SHALL WE HAVE A PAPER MILL.

This is a question which a few of our enterprising citizens are now quietly canvassing. We alluded to the subject a year ago at some length and presented facts which awakened considerable interest at the time, but no definite move was made. The conditions for the successful introduction of a paper mill now are more favorable than ever before in our history. One of the chief inducements that may be named is the availability of the splendid forty horse power steam engine of the Anamosa Water Works Company, as a cheap motive power. As the reservoir system is the one in use here the engine is required to be operated only at regular intervals during the week, an hour or two of work on each occasion sufficing to maintain the required supply in the reservoir. The balance of the time, as a matter of course, the engine is idle, whereas it could be kept running day and night, if necessary, and not interfere in the least with the duty it now performs. The Water Works Company, we have no doubt, would be glad to furnish at a nominal rate the steam power now utilized to so comparatively small an extent. Certainly the advantages would be mutual and really of no slight importance if we view the proposition in the right light. A paper mill company, to start with, would not be involved in the heavy outlay of capital otherwise necessary in securing efficient steam power and erecting a boiler-house. As already intimated, the use of the water-works machinery would be available to a large extent at a comparatively small cost. Then, on the other hand, the expense to the water-works company for running the engine would probably be done away with entirely, or nearly so. But better still, the works would always be in operation and, in this particular, would very largely increase the efficiency of the fire department in case of serious conflagrations and render practicable in the future some extensions of pipe not now even thought of.

North and east of Anamosa—and south, too, after passing the four-mile timber belt—is as fine a farming country as the goodly state of Iowa can boast. Within a radius of six or eight miles there are harvested annually thousands upon thousands of tons of straw that would find its way to a paper mill and bring to the farmers within the reach of this market an aggregate income that would be simply immense. A gentleman who has informed himself in this matter tells us that in several localities in this state where paper mills are established straw brings eight to ten dollars per ton! These figures do not rule in all cases, but even at half those rates the benefit to farmers would be incomparably superior to any now derived from the use of their straw; for we all know that, in many cases, the straw-stack is left to the tender mercies of cattle and hogs, with the expectation that twice or thrice the amount eaten will be destroyed outright, while the balance goes to ashes in the spring simply because that is the the easiest way to get rid of it.

Taking all these facts together, with other considerations that will readily suggest themselves, we see that there are good and cogent reasons why a paper mill could be made a paying institution in Anamosa, for there is no question, of course, as to the permanent demand for all that the mill would produce. We understand that a correspondence has been opened with a paper mill manufacturer in one of the leading commercial towns in the west, and we trust that measures may be instituted which will bring about a successful movement in favor of such a manufacturing establishment in this place. It is just such an enterprise as will give additional life and vigor to trade, add to our population and create a new and valuable source of revenue to our farmers. Let the subject be agitated; let us take hold of it in earnest; enlist others in the enterprise, and our candid belief is that, with an experienced and reliable man at the head of it, the project can be made a success.

Shall we build a paper mill this summer?